

DEVELOPING WINNING ATTITUDES-TRADERS, TRADING, AND HEMI-SYNC®

by Mark Douglas

Mark Douglas is president of Trading Behavior Dynamics, Inc., a Chicago-based consulting firm that works with individual traders, certified trading advisers, banks, and brokerage firms internationally. He has written a best-selling book within the trading community titled The Disciplined Trader: Developing Winning Attitudes, and uses Hemi-Sync as part of a popular workshop for traders.

As a natural outgrowth of my book, which deals with the psychology of trading both the stock and futures markets, I developed an intensive two-day workshop, "How To Become a Disciplined Trader." The workshop focuses on helping traders understand and develop the mental framework (a unique "market mind-set") necessary to interact with the market environment in the most effective ways. It is in the workshops that I use the Hemi-Sync tapes, building them around the H-PLUS® technology.

The basic premise of the workshop is that there are many common, or culturally learned, beliefs that prevent people from becoming consistently successful as traders. The generally accepted industry statistic is that less than two percent of the people who identify themselves as traders achieve any measure of consistency. The other ninety-eight percent either consistently lose, or they can produce consistent earnings up to some internally imposed limit, after which they unconsciously sabotage their success, lose their earnings, and begin the cycle again.

Consistent success, as opposed to the kind of random winning and losing most traders subject themselves to, is definitely possible. But, it requires very diligent effort on the trader's part to change many of the ways in which he thinks about being wrong and losing money. Regardless of how good someone becomes at analyzing and predicting market behavior, the trader will inevitably be wrong and lose money sometimes. This is an unavoidable fact of trading. However, the typical trader is unwilling to accept this inevitability and, in the process of trying to avoid the inevitable, actually creates the very experiences he fears.

When one considers that all of us have within us a natural propensity to avoid pain, both physically and emotionally, it is easy to see how traders can get themselves into trouble. Among the mass beliefs of our culture is the tacit agreement that losing money and being wrong are intrinsically pain producing.

As the trader attempts to avoid those conditions, he will naturally ignore, distort, or rationalize information that indicates he is in a losing trade. Therefore, rather than acknowledging that

reality and cutting his losses, he maintains his position until the pain of losing one more dollar is greater than his fear of admitting he is wrong.

Many traders achieve consistent earnings after attending one of my workshops. However, to do it, the trader must first recognize that the market environment is, in almost every way, different from the cultural environment in which he was brought up. He must then learn to alter or neutralize the very fundamental beliefs and fears that were learned long before he ever decided to become a trader.

In the workshop, traders learn mental techniques to monitor their thoughts or “states of being” to determine if they are in states that are most conducive to giving themselves money, or at least not giving their money away. They learn to identify what beliefs they are operating out of in any given moment, and determine if these beliefs are appropriate to their goal of becoming consistently successful traders. For instance, a trader must be able to perceive being wrong and losing money as conditions offering information rather than as conditions producing pain. If the trader makes an assessment that a particular belief is dysfunctional and he completely understands why it won’t work, he then uses the “Plus—No More, No More” Function Command from the H-PLUS *De-Hab* tape to neutralize it.

Originally, I intended to script and use self-hypnosis tapes as the primary means to break down these dysfunctional beliefs. However, I decided against self-hypnosis in favor of Hemi-Sync for a couple of reasons. First, self-hypnosis as a system for change is somewhat passive, and, second, self-hypnosis tapes in particular are nonspecific.

Many of the beliefs that traders need to confront and neutralize to be successful are very powerful components of their identities and do not break down easily. It takes as much, if not more, energy to neutralize these beliefs as it does to maintain them. A person passively listening to a self-hypnosis tape simply doesn’t generate the intensity of energy necessary to produce effective results.

Furthermore, messages on self-hypnosis tapes have to be generic in nature, generally applying to everyone who might listen. Although many of the beliefs traders need to neutralize fall into general categories, each is person-specific, unique to each individual. I have found that when working with mental energy the more specific one is, the better the results. Hemi-Sync avoids both deficiencies because it provokes a very active response to a very specific issue.

Once the H-PLUS Function Command has been installed through listening to the tape, the trader must learn when, where, and how to use it. I provide very specific instructions for activating the Function Command consciously and appropriately. Assuming the trader has learned to recognize when he is operating out of a belief inconsistent with his goals, at the moment he realizes it he must capture whatever thought or emotion is being experienced and make it tangible. The traders are taught to do this by either stating the thoughts or emotions as

beliefs, or by using some form of mental imagery to give the beliefs as much substance as possible. Once they are completely clear about what they want to release, they state the Command with as much conviction as possible—"Plus—No More, No More!" The greater the energy behind the conviction, the more pronounced a shift they will feel.

Other than the effects produced by the low-frequency binaural beat stimulation, it is the high level of participation required—mental focus, personal choice, and willingness to use the Function Command—that makes the H-PLUS system so effective in helping people create desired change.

Approximately one month after the workshop I send survey forms to the participants asking them to indicate on a scale from one to ten 1) their ability to identify and capture beliefs, 2) the strength of their convictions when they use the commands, and 3) the effectiveness of the Function Command in neutralizing beliefs. Results from the returned surveys indicate a very strong correlation between the participants' perceived abilities to identify exactly what beliefs they want to neutralize, the strength of their convictions, and the effectiveness rating they assign to the Function Command.

Interestingly, most people who take the workshop have had very little exposure to information or concepts related to self-awareness or learning to change oneself through directed conscious effort. Despite this, virtually everyone's initial reaction to the H-PLUS tapes is overwhelmingly positive, regardless of how skeptical or uncomfortable they may have been at the first listening.

It is clear that the tapes resonate with people at a very deep and fundamental level, regardless of whether they understand the dynamics at work.

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